

## Rock A-Hula to Fitness

Presenter: Kym Atwood  
University of West Florida  
[katwood@uwf.edu](mailto:katwood@uwf.edu)

My first encounter with Hula dance was in physical education class in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. One of our physical education instructors had studied dance and cheer so she taught each grade level (1-6) a dance or cheer routine and we put on a show for our parents. I was a cheerleader, and I was jealous of the 5<sup>th</sup> graders because they did Hula. I asked my teacher if she would teach us the Hula, and she did! I fell in love with the Hula. Years later I had the opportunity to study Hula from several professional Hula dancers, and I actually had a career dancing for parties at hotels and resorts.

I teach a Hula Fitness class at UWF and the students always tell me how much fun they have and that Hula is a great workout. I am using the most basic steps for today's workout. I hope you enjoy it!

### Hawaiian Steps

- 1) **Kaholo** (Ka-ho-lo)- the Vamp step- 4 counts. (1)Step Right to right side, (2)close Left to right, (3)step right to right side, (4)tap ball of left foot to right; reverse feet to left.  
**Arms:** R held out to the side shoulder level, palms down, left arm bent in front chest level, arms change to left when step left. Knees stay bent and hips swing as knee straightens.
- 2) **Hela** (Hel-la)- Foot Spread- 2 counts- bent knees; Right foot reaches out to front at about 45 degree angle, returns to position. Weight and hip to left. Reverse with left.  
**Arms:** Right arm just below shoulder level and over right foot (palm down); Right comes into chest with foot; Reverse. Can be done traveling forward and backward.
- 3) **Double Hela**-4 counts-Same as above but right foot taps out front, into position, out front & closes position with weight shift onto right foot. Reverse. **Arm** follows direction of leg.
- 4) **Kawelu** (Kah vel oo)- 4 count-(1)Right steps forward, (2)left steps in place, (3)right closes to left, (4) left taps in place. Reverse. Hips go over foot weight is placed on. **Arms** right palm down circle out to front and into chest. Arms follow leg.
- 5) **Kalakaua** (Kala-coo-ah)- 4 count-same as Kawelu except face left side when step forward, on count 3 make a ½ turn to right as step on right, count 4 tap left to right; Reverse left side facing the right side. Step changes directions opposite of lead foot on which you step. **Arms** same as Kawelu
- 6) **Double Kakakaua**- 8 counts- Kalakaua repeated twice with a direction change.
- 7) **Holoholo** (ho-lo-ho-lo)- 8counts- Kaholo twice in the same direction. **Arms** can do Kaholo arms.
- 8) **'Ami** ( ah mee)-hip rotations. Start left to go right and right to go left. **Arms** for right 'ami, right arm across chest (palm down), elbow up; left on hip, wrist forward, fingers back. Look to right diagonal. Reverse.

9) **Pau** - to finish or bow. Right foot touches front with left knee bent, right hand on top of left with palms down, arms extended front, slightly drop head

#### Tahitian Steps

Tahitian hula is usually fast paced, but it can also be very lyrical with complex arm and hand motions. It is harder than Hawaiian hula.

1) **Tamau** (Tam-oo). I count each-hips swing side to side. **Arms:** extended side with flexed wrists. Can walk forward & backward

2) **'Ami** - same as above with extended arms side

3) **Toma**- 2 count- double hip bump side to side

Mens step

4) **Otaha** (yo ta ha)- one foot pivots to the front and to the side, the other foot stays in place, step together to change feet.

5) **Paoti** (pah-oh-tee)-knee flap-like funky chicken

---

#### Some Basic Hawaiian Arm Positions

1) Mountain-Kaholo arms angles upward

2) Love/Aloha-cross arms at chest

3) Rain- hands up to one side and fingers wiggle as arms come down

4) Bay- curve wrist at sides, bring hands to front, fingers touch (palms out)

5) Beach-hands low, palms down, either from center out or from side to side

6) House/Shack-make A with finger tips

7) Waves- up and down motion of hands with palms down

8) Wind-one arm out to side-other arm circles overhead

9) Tahitian Ams- "v " position overhead, arms extended front at shoulder level with palms up, arms above head with index fingers touching & palms out, one arm up at side (overhead) & the other arm down/Reverse, cupped hands=flower (Tiare), hands on shoulders with elbows out

Music: Club Trax from Powermusic.com

Myriah's Polynesian Bazaar has various videos that include Hula for children.

---

Hukilau Dance                    good for all ages/grades but especially children

Hukilau (hoo kee lau')

This is an old Hawaiian way of fishing, involving casting a long net from the shore, then enlisting a large group to help pull the net to shore. The net is lined with ki (ti) leaves which help scare fish toward the middle of the net. If you don't pull in the net, you don't eat!

Huki = pull lau = leaves, specifically, ki (ti) leaves

The Hukilau Song was based on Jack Owens visit to Laie Bay.

The famous Hukilau Beach is located at the northern part of the Bay on the island of Oahu.

### **The Hukilau Song**

Jack Owens © 1948

Oh we're going to a Hukilau  
A huki huki huki huki Hukilau  
Everybody loves the Hukilau  
Where the laulau is the kaukau at the lû`au

We throw our nets out into the sea  
And all the `ama`ama come a-swimming to me  
Oh, we're going to a Hukilau  
A huki huki huki Hukilau

What a beautiful day for fishing  
That old Hawaiian way  
Where the Hukilau nets are swishing  
Down in old Lâ`ie bay

### **Basic Steps**

Kaholo-side together side dig

`Ami-hip circle

### **Gestures**

Going-hitchiker thumb

Hukilau -pull -arms reach out to R & L sides and make a pulling motion into the body.  
Do 2 pulls per side.

Everybody-touchdown arms

Loves-cross arms over chest

Laulau (food)-fish, chicken or pork wrapped in ti leaves and cooked in an imu (pit oven in the ground). Hold left hand with palm up, right indexfinger and third finger together circle L palm to represent stirring the bowl

Kaukau-slang for food- put two fingers of R hand to mouth as if to eat, open mouth

Luau-big party-no gesture

Throw nets-raise arms up above head and bring down to chest level in front of body

Sea-cupped hands palms down go up and down (waves)

`ama `ama-mullet-palms together, sway side to side

Me-point to self

Beautiful day- open arms overhead

Fishing-R arm throws a spear

Old Hawaiian way- 3 ami-down and up-tell kids it represents stirring the fish up from the bottom

Swishing nets- hands make figure 8 in front of thighs-if wear a grass skirt shake skirt

Laie Bay- both arms circle form back to front of both with palms out; they meet in the middle

Pau-bow or finish-R foot placed front with ball of foot-left knee slightly bent, arms extended front, R hand either on top of left or beside left. Bow head.